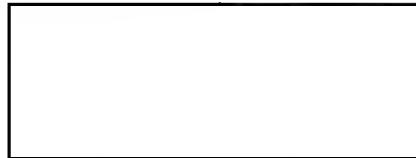


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ISRAEL-EGYPT: THE ISRAELIS BELIEVE THAT NASIR INTENDS TO CONTINUE HIS "BRINKMANSHIP" ALONG THE SUEZ CANAL UNTIL THEY MOUNT A MAJOR RETALIATORY STRIKE.

ACCORDING TO A SENSITIVE STATE DEPARTMENT CABLE, AMBASSADOR RABIN HAS TOLD US OFFICIALS THAT HE IS CONVINCED NASIR WILL INTENSIFY ACTIVITY ALONG THE CANAL. RABIN WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE EGYPTIAN RAIDS ACROSS THE CANAL BECOME MORE FREQUENT AND GROW IN SIZE FROM THE CURRENT 15 MEN TO 100-200 MEN. RABIN BELIEVES THAT NASIR IS WILLING TO SACRIFICE ALL ECONOMIC FACILITIES ALONG THE WEST BANK OF THE CANAL.

THE FORMER ISRAELI CHIEF OF STAFF SAID THAT HE DOUBTS NASIR WILL CHANGE HIS TACTICS UNTIL HIT WITH SOMETHING "MUCH MORE SEVERE" THAN THE ISRAELI COMMANDO RAID OF 30 APRIL IN THE CENTRAL NILE VALLEY. THE ISRAELIS, WHO INITIALLY CLAIMED THAT THE RAID WAS A CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS, HAVE RECENTLY EMPHASIZED ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT, AND OTHER REPORTS INDICATE THE RAID RESULTED IN ONLY LIMITED DAMAGE.

RABIN SAID THAT WITH THE COMPLETION OF ISRAELI PROTECTIVE BUNKERS, THE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES THE EGYPTIANS CAN INFILCT IN THE CANAL AREA IS LIMITED. BY ISRAELI STANDARDS, HOWEVER, RABIN SAID, IT IS STILL A HIGH NUMBER.

THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT REPORTS THAT NASIR IS PLANNING TO FOLLOW UP A SERIES OF CROSS-CANAL COMMANDO RAIDS WITH A CANAL CROSSING IN STRENGTH. NASIR DOES NOT, HOWEVER, HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL CROSSING AND HOLD A BRIDGEHEAD ON THE EAST BANK FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME.

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